Lead Based Paints Hazards

Lead-based paint presents potential health hazards, particularly to small children. State policy requires these hazards to be removed in housing units occupied by children under 6. Homeowners and landlords face liability issues associated with these requirements and risks. Some landlords may address these issues by refusing to rent to families with small children even though this practice raises housing discrimination issues.

The Federal Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that blood lead levels of 10 micrograms or above can cause health problems in children, including lower intelligence, behavior problems and problems with blood vessels, blood pressure, the liver and kidneys. The most common cause of high blood lead levels in children is from contact with lead dust in the home.

Because funding for lead poisoning and prevention programs at the Oregon Department of Human Services was cut in July 2013, ODHS staff are completely unable to fulfill requests for recent data on lead poisoning in Washington County. As a result, all data pertaining to lead poisoning comes from the 2010-2015 Consolidated Plan. Data from that Consolidated Plan shows that from 2000 to 2007, there were 104,889 blood lead tests conducted in Oregon. Of that amount, almost 4.5%, or 4,732 tests, have been conducted on Washington County residents over that seven year period. In 2007, 902 tests were conducted. During that year, the results showed that six people (less than one percent) had blood lead levels consistent with lead poisoning, and four of those six were children under the age of six.

Thirty-one people had elevated blood levels. A normal reading of the level of blood would be between 2-3 micrograms, a level as high as 10 micrograms would indicate lead poisoning and according to the Department, a reading of higher than 10 warrants some kind of action or follow-up. In general, this indicates a very low percentage of residents who tested positively for lead poisoning (approximately 0.7% of those tested).

In looking at the results of lead-based paint testing by age, 818 tests were conducted on children aged 0–5 years. Of that amount, four tests reflected levels at 10 micrograms and over. In general, this indicates a very low percentage of residents who tested positively for lead poisoning (approximately 0.7% of those tested).

Lead-based paint hazards generally are correlated with the age of housing units and their condition. Typically, homes constructed before 1978 have the highest potential for lead- based paint hazards. Based on data from the 2008-2012 ACS, there are approximately 87,000 housing units that were constructed before 1978. While no data is available to determine which units still have lead-based paint hazards, data from the 2010-2015 Consolidated Plan indicated that in the year 2000, an estimated 11% of all owner-occupied housing (estimated 11,795 units) and 9% of all rental housing (estimated 5,829 units) may have had lead-based paint hazards. Extremely low-, low- and moderate-income families represent about 47% percent of renters and 18% percent of homeowners. Assuming that these households are relatively evenly distributed among housing units of different ages, it is estimated that approximately 2,603 extremely low-, low- and moderate-income renter households and 2,017 extremely low- , low- and moderate-income homeowner households are exposed to lead-based paint hazards.

TABLE 3-84

Blood Level Test Results, Washington County (2007)

	Blood Levels in Micrograms			
Blood Levels by Age	BLL <5	BLL 5-9	TOTAL BLL 10+	
0-5 Years	785	29	4	818
6+ Years	80	2	2	84

Source: ODHS, Office of Disease Prevention and Epidemiology

TABLE 3-85 **Risk of Lead-Based Paint Hazard**

Risk of Lead-Based Paint Hazard	Owner-Occupied		Renter-Occupied	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Number of Units Built Before 1980	52,407	42%	28,901	39%
Housing Units build before 1980 with children present	16,238	13%	8,307	11%

Source: 2007-2011 ACS (Total Units) 2007-2011 CHAS (Units with Children present)

Unit Occupancy & Vacancy

The Washington County portion of Tualatin, Hillsboro and Beaverton and had the highest vacancy rates (rental and owner-occupied units combined) in the County in 2012, at 7.7% and 6.7% respectively. In general, a vacancy rate in the range of 5% to 6% is considered healthy, reflecting a manageable turnover of apartments and for-sale homes. Most of Washington County met this standard in 2012, with the County as a whole demonstrating vacancy of 5.8%.

Of the vacant units in Washington County in 2012, roughly 35% were for rent, 22% were for sale, and 12% were rented or sold, but not currently occupied.

TABLE 3-86 **Occupancy of Housing Units, Washington County (2012)**

Name of Area	Housing units	Housing units: Occupied	Housing units:	% Vacant
Banks	576	548	28	4.9%
Beaverton	38,957	36,347	2,610	6.7%
Cornelius	3,474	3,278	196	5.6%
Durham	568	548	20	3.5%
Forest Grove	7,946	7,423	523	6.6%
Gaston	293	278	15	5.1%
Hillsboro	34,639	32,321	2,318	6.7%
King City	2,046	1,967	79	3.9%
Lake Oswego (part)	0	0	0	0.0%
North Plains	852	812	40	4.7%
Portland (part)	778	778	0	0.0%
Rivergrove (part)	15	11	4	26.7%
Sherwood	6,244	6,095	149	2.4%
Tigard	20,257	19,248	1,009	5.0%
Tualatin (part)	9,465	8,735	730	7.7%

Wilsonville (part)	297	297	0	0.0%
Total Unincorporated	85,979	81,474	4,505	5.2%
Washington County	**212,386**	**200,160**	**12,226**	**5.8%**

Source: 2008-2012 ACS

TABLE 3-87
Total Vacant

Vacant Units between 2000-2012

	2010 Census	2010 ACS	2011 ACS	2012 ACS
Units	11,516	13,665	11,862	11,044

Source: 2010 Census; 2010, 2011 and 2012 American Community Surveys (1 - Year)